

MMDA lifts number coding scheme from Dec. 25 to Jan. 1

ERC junks Napocor bid but 18 centavos/kWh increase due in January

8 robbery gang members killed in Tarlac, Nueva Ecija

RP hunger hits record high of 23.7%, says SWS

Neda chief sees full brunt of crisis in 2009

PNP fashion statement: 'Fake-proof' uniforms



By Tessa Quinsada
IT'S A FASHION FORECAST straight from Camp Grease: This new, napabody take-proof outfit won't only look good on cops.

PNP FASHION 41



Tuesday, December 23, 2008 • 4 sections / Vol. 24 / No. 15 P18 online: www.inquirer.net

Gingerbread house in mall draws crowds

By Tessa Quinsada
Inquirer General Issues

CLARENDON—A REPLICA of a gingerbread house at IM Clark has been drawing thousands of people, mostly children, and contributing to the Christmas cheer.

Made of wood and finished with paint.

SENATE PROBE OF FUND SCAM

Gov't lost P55M in fertilizer deal

By Christine G. Arellano

THE GOVERNMENT LOST P55 MILLION from the P185 million worth of fertilizer it purchased from a company that was the biggest supplier in the P228-million fertilizer fund scam.

At the reconstruction industry of the Senate inquiry into the fund scam, Sen. Philip Alonzo, president of the Senate, admitted that her company won only P50 million from the fertilizer sold to the Department of Agriculture in 2004, but agreed to make it appear that the transaction was worth P185 million (or P35 million more).

Gregorio said the P185 million was deposited in a fresh bank account that was arranged by purported runner Marlene Ayonzo, but to which she had no access.

And to "cover up" the P55 million from the paying eyes of tax officials, she taught, with Ayonzo's help, an amnesty granted by Congress on that year, Gregorio said.

But Ayonzo denied Gregorio's claim and insisted that she was a mere "volunteer" of the foundation that was set up to serve as the distributor of the fertilizer bought by the government for local government units, which were to turn this cost to farmers.

Ayonzo, Gregorio and two other "small-time players" clashed at the hearing as they gave different versions of their involvement in the fund scam that, in Sen. Philip Alonzo's initial assessment, was "one whole syndicate operating."

"All of you are in deep trouble. This is like pecking a banana. Everything will come out," Sen. Richard Gordon, chair of the Senate blue ribbon committee, told the five witnesses.

Apart from Ayonzo and Gregorio, the other witnesses who testified at the hearing were Leopoldo Morte-Llorina, GOPT LOBBY 31



AYONZO—Alleged runner of fertilizer. GOPT LOBBY 31



GREGORIO—Her firm sold fertilizer. GOPT LOBBY 31

Cory says sorry to Erap

Concedes Edsa II a mistake

By Lito B. Salaverria

IT WAS HER SECOND MEA culpa, but this time former President Corason Aquino said it in his presence.

Ex-President Joseph Estrada said he felt vindicated.

In the star-studded launch yesterday of former Speaker Jose de Venecia's book that gave accounts of events that had founded President Macapagal-Arroyo, Aquino asked Estrada for forgiveness for joining the Edsa II uprising that ousted him.

"I am one of those who played guilty for the 2001 (uprising). Let me now say 'magpapakataw'. Pagawarin na sa lahat (All of us made mistakes. Forgive me)," Aquino said in her brief but well-rehearsed remarks at the Pineda mall in Draga.

She made her statement right after Estrada's speech when he had ridiculed De Venecia for joining Edsa II, for which he said he had given him his "full and absolute pardon" as an exercise of his executive privilege.

Aquino thanked De Venecia for his behind-the-scenes stories of the struggle in the Arroyo administration.

"Thank you, Joe, for coming out to me, Margot, as I'm waiting to be small as ants at (I've been waiting for you to say sorry to me)." Aquino said.

"I refer to the enemy called politics and political alliance which in the past have led some men in uniform to abandon the constitutional tradition of AFP (AFP) 100/100 41



EDSA II MEMORIES—Estrada adviser, former President Joseph Estrada and Corason Aquino chat during the launching of a book about the political saga of former Speaker Jose de Venecia. At right is De Venecia's wife, Gila.

PARAÑAQUE GUN BATTLE

Navy agents linked to subdivision deaths

By Marlon Ramon

INTELLIGENCE AGENTS OF THE Navy are to blame for the deaths of a woman and her 8-year-old daughter in the fierce shooting in Parañaque City early this month, police sources told the Inquirer.

According to three senior police officers familiar with the shooting and the

ongoing investigation, heavily armed men belonging to the Naval Intelligence and Security Bureau (NISB) were in the United Parañaque Subdivision last June before the purported gun battle between policemen and suspected robbers on the night of Dec. 5.

One source said more than 10 NISB agents were positioned only a few meters away from where Alfonso de Ve-

ra, 36, and his daughter Lia Alfonso (not Leah Ayonzo, as earlier reported) were shot dead on board their vehicle.

The source said the Navy men had been deployed in the area along with members of the Special Action Force (SAF), an elite anti-terrorism unit of the Philippine National Police.

NAT AGENTS 31

English-only bill faces tough fight

By Lito B. Salaverria

TRUE TO HIS NAME THAT TRANSFORMS into "Arroyo," Rep. Magangop Gungason promises to fight tooth and nail to stop a bill seeking the use of English as the medium of instruction in elementary schools.

The Marikina congressman yesterday vowed to block the bill in the House of Representatives, which he said might help students land jobs in call centers but further erode basic education in the country.

Given Rep. Edwardo Gales has said that the passage of his English bill is virtually assured once the House resumes its session in mid-January with more than 200 lawmakers backing the proposed measure.

Rising unemployment rates underscore the need for Filipino workers to be proficient in English so that they can stay competitive in job markets here and abroad, Gales said.

But Gungason, who has authored a

ENGL 100/100 41

Abra tries to shake off violent image

MANUEL ABRA—RUSTINO BERNARDO visits the cemetery on weekdays and prays by the grave of his brother, a local politician Abra who was assassinated as he left a church in December 2006.

"Before, I also thought about revenge," said the newly elected governor of the remote northern Philippine province of Abra. But, he added, "we also want Abra to stand for something other than gangster."

Haunted between assassins and a wide river, Abra is struggling to shake off its associated reputation as the lair of the Philippines' worst mafias and political assassins are the only industries making a killing.

The province of 250,000 people has only 64 prisoners, but they allegedly include some of the country's most notorious hit men.

How the going was for a Manila-style hit on a local politician was just P5,000 in last year's elections, according to people in the know.

ABRA TRIES 41

AFP 'enemy' called politics now dead, says Yano

By Jocelyn R. Uy
and Christian Y. Eguerra

THE "ENEMY" THAT IS CALLED POLITICS within the Armed Forces of the Philippines is dead.

Gen. Alexander Yano, AFP chief of staff, said so in his speech during the AFP's 71st founding anniversary yesterday at Camp Aguinaldo, subtly railing against the renegade soldiers who took up arms against the Arroyo administration. (Related story on Page A6.)

"There is one state enemy and one more expression of loyalty and honor that must be lauded on this occasion," he said.

"I refer to the enemy called politics and political alliance which in the past have led some men in uniform to abandon the constitutional tradition of AFP (AFP) 100/100 41



GOVERNMENT UNIFORMS—Filipino boxing star and military reserve PGT, Manny Pacquiao (right) salutes with fellow officers before receiving the Philippine Legion of Honor for Sports award and military medals in top military attire during the AFP founding rites.

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Second FRONT PAGE

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Hunger hits record high—SWS

AN ESTIMATED 4.5 MILLION HOUSEHOLDS EXPERIENCED involuntary hunger at least once in the past three months as hunger hit a new record high at 23.7 percent, according to the latest survey by the Social Weather Stations.

"The June hunger record is 11 points above the 12-year average of 12.6 percent," SWS said in a statement released yesterday.

The latest figure surpassed the previous record high of 21.5 percent registered in September 2007, it added.

Hunger has been in double-digits for over two years. The hunger average for 2008 is 18.9 percent, higher than the 2007 average of 17.7 percent, SWS noted.

The Fourth-Quarter 2008 Social Weather Stations survey also found that an estimated 3.3 million families (18.1 percent) experienced "household hunger" or those who reported hunger "only once" or "a few times" over the last three months—another record high and up from 15.2 percent (12.7 million families) in September.

Domestic hunger, on the other hand, defined as experiencing hunger "often" or "always," was at 5.2 percent (264,800 households).

In 2008, up from 3.2 percent (180,000 families) in September. The current rate is seven points above the 14-year average since hunger rose at 3.3 percent, SWS said.

Severe hunger

The survey asked respondents specifically if about involuntary hunger, or hunger due to lack of anything to eat.

Domestic severe, Malabon now has the highest proportion of households experiencing hunger at 35.7 percent, (1.4 million families) a new record high for the area. Overall hunger rose by 13 points in the area, from 18.5 percent in September to 31.7 percent in December.

Moderate hunger in Mindanao was at 27.7 percent, up by nearly 12 percentage points from 16 percent in September, while severe hunger in the same area is 6 percent, up by about 4 percentage points from 2.3 percent in September.

Meanwhile, overall hunger rate was at a record high in Metro Manila (23.3 percent or 270,000 families), Visayas (20.7 percent or 750,000 families) and in Luzon outside Metro Manila (20 percent or 1.6 million families).

Moderate hunger also rose in other areas—by 7 points in the Visayas (from 13.3 percent to 20 percent) and by 3 points in Metro Manila (10 percent to 13.5 percent). On the other hand, it declined by 2 points in the Balance of Luzon (from 15.5 percent to 13 percent).

"In all areas, the latest moderate hunger rates remain higher than their 10-year averages," SWS said. In Metro Manila, the 10-year average for moderate hunger is 8.5 percent in the Balance of Luzon, 9.1 percent in Visayas, 8.9 percent; and in Mindanao, 10.3 percent.

Meanwhile, severe hunger rose by about 3 points in the Balance of Luzon (from 3.5 percent to 6 percent), also a new record high, and by 2 points in the Visayas (from 2.5 percent to 4.5 percent). However, it declined in Metro Manila by 3 percentage points (from 6 percent to 3 percent). —Ara Arduana, Inquirer Research

Stop dreaming about running again, Erap told

By SEC. C. Calanog Jr.

TWO LEADERSHIP

Finally, after President Joseph Estrada in cap announcing of returning to whistleblowing and give other politicians a chance to take a shot at the highest office.

Majority Leader Antonio Dela Roca said it was unclear if Estrada would continue "yabing" about a second term as president because the Commission specifically has said:

"If by some means he is allowed to run, he should not run because he already had a shot at it and he blew it. He has to give other candidates a chance to lead this nation," Dela Roca said in a press interview.

Waring Roca Rep. Eduardo Manzano Jr. said both Dela Roca and President Manuel Arroyo should abandon their plans for reelection (in three days) or term extension (in President Arroyo's case) respectively.

Manzano said the country is "break even" in 2009.



ESTRADA

"By 2010, the 'weather' politics of Erap and Gloria should end [or we can have] a new set of leaders who [will] be better, who are not thieves, liars and cheats," said Arroyo.

Manzano said he would be disappointed if Erap is in the presidential race in 2010 (the latest was a plan to run with Sen. Loren Legarda as his vice-presidential pick). "I would support him if he is a better candidate than the others," he said.

List of SC bets includes 2 who condemned Erap

By Norman Borborides

a Chief Justice Reynato Sison

TWO OF THE

most popular who endorsed former President Joseph Estrada in the 2001 election are among the six candidates in the list of bets for the 2010 presidential election.

Manzano said the Supreme Court will have to decide if Estrada is eligible to run in 2010.

Manzano said Estrada is not eligible to run in 2010 because he was impeached by the Judicial and Bar Council along with Chief Justice Antonio Maria Villamor and Justice Francisco Villamor and Justice Francisco Villamor.

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McGraw-Hill

Recto sees full brunt of crisis in '09

By Christine E. Esguerra

WILL THE PHILIPPINE REMAIN its relatively good shape, one of President Macapagal-Arroyo's economic managers has warned that the local economy was set to experience the "full brunt" of the global financial crisis next year.

Joseph Recto, director general of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), said the first two quarters of the new year would be "brutal" in determining how the country would cope with the financial turmoil.

"It's not a possibility—it's a fact," he said of the last moment of the crisis in a phone interview with the Inquirer. "We will experience the full brunt next year."

This was why Recto extended closing of Congress' House in approval before the Christmas break, the proposed P1.55-billion national budget for the new year.

Safe projects

To save the dollar would normally keep the government from undertaking big infrastructure projects. A major focus in the national expenditure program—and the budget management.

"They [investors and those involved] should be uncomfortable," he said. "They know the gravity of the situation. But this is a challenge, every small country."

Even if the confidence continues after the budget during the last working day in January, Recto said the government will have less "flexibility" to act.

The National Development Bank (NDB) and the Office of the President

are also aware of the situation, he added.

At president's 73rd anniversary of the Armed Forces, President Macapagal-Arroyo said the country had so far avoided the impact of the financial turmoil, one of "the darkest of the globe is now in recession."

"There is a global economic crisis but fortunately—through a mix of careful planning, economic reforms and the hard work of many people—we have thus far prevented the global crisis from becoming a Philippine crisis," he said in his speech at Camp Aguinaldo.

Financial analysts have called the country's experience during the 1997 Asian financial

crisis...and the key adjustments that made it

smooth—for its relatively good standing today. Mr. Arroyo said the local economy still grew by 4.6 percent compared to 7.2 percent last year despite the economic slowdown elsewhere.

Recto said the period from January to May next year would provide a "window of opportunity" for the local economy to cushion the impact of the global financial crisis.

During the period, he said the private sector was expected to adopt a "wait and see" attitude and not have excessive demand for products.

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Filipina writes diary from Taiwan death row

By Kristine L. Alon

LARGE READING REFUSED BARS BY THORAN, the Filipino resident wanted of monitoring a Taiwanese businessman, won't be sending a diary to her children in the Philippines.

Gracia Arana Alonzo, 39, of Cebu, Legaspi, was arrested in 2007 by the FBI and is now in the death row of the United States in 2007.

She is currently in the death row.

Gracia Arana Alonzo, 39, of Cebu, Legaspi, was arrested in 2007 by the FBI and is now in the death row of the United States in 2007.

She is currently in the death row.

"She looked well and seemed to be in high spirits. She's a brave woman although she's written about her appeal," Gracia said, adding that the latest reader was being received with the Taiwanese people.

The Chinese administration said Alonzo had asked them to give her diary to her children and to make it public.

"Someone who reads it would know what really happened," Gracia said. "She writes in her diary every day."

Lives with David

Gracia said in a statement that Alonzo wanted to give the diary to her family so they would have a glimpse of her life with American boyfriend, David Filson.

"She would like the world to know she

had a happy life with David in Taiwan. She also hopes the media will cover her appeal process," Gracia said.

But David Filson can read her diary to her family, she would have to ask permission from prison authorities, Gracia said. "It will be translated into a Mandarin as an English translation," Gracia said.

Confession, remaining

Alonzo had confessed to killing her businessman (his name has been removed) in her confession. The FBI had wanted to see a copy of the diary before allowing an English language reading, said the FBI, based on the number to protect her boyfriend Filson.

Alonzo alleged that Filson was murdered by a Mr. Zhang and a Mr. Wei who also ordered her to dump Filson's body.

Alonzo further claimed that the two men had threatened the life of Filson, who was in the United States and remained outside on June 8 this year.

No leads

Taiwanese authorities have yet to find a lead on the two Chinese men.

Alonzo also asked Philippine authorities to look for witnesses for her confession.

Alonzo said her office would look after the deceased her children. For her part, Gracia said her organization would assist in the children's education.

Most Pinoys in Lebanon illegal

By Kristine Alon

LARGE SECRETARY MARIANO RODRIGUEZ yesterday admitted that most Filipino currently working in Lebanon were undocumented, having obtained a deployment letter to the Philippines country imposed by the Philippine government in 2006.

"Yes, they're not registered, most of them. Our industry's estimate is there are between 20,000 and 30,000 of them there," said Rodriguez when asked about reports many Filipino domestic helpers had gone "homeless," leaving behind paying jobs to maintain and other businesses thriving in

Lebanon's service industry.

Rodriguez, who was at the Philippine Consulate in Beirut, Lebanon, to assist in the country's Philippine workers, said the deployment has remained in place because the Department of Foreign Affairs still considers the situation in Lebanon "dangerous."

"We have our deployment centers in their (DFA) advisory regarding the security situation," Rodriguez said.

Gracia Arana Alonzo, 39, of Cebu, Legaspi, was arrested in 2007 by the FBI and is now in the death row of the United States in 2007.

Travelers told: Be early for ferry trip

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advised its passengers to arrive at its

stations early before

departure time to be able to

travel "with minimal

hassle" this holiday season.

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EVER GOTESCO	DAGURAN		ORIBOC	MARDEL
ORIBOC	URDANETA		LOLO	TETUAN
ROSARIO PASIG	DABANATUM		KALIBO	LIBERTAD
ALIBALL	TAGBIRAN			
CUBAO	EAST GATE CITY WALK			
ALMAYDA	ANGELES			
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FAIRVIEW	DAGURAN	PURTO PRINCE	DOWNTOWN TAGLOREAN	TETUAN
LAGRO	URDANETA	LUCENA	ORIBOC	CLAMANG
EVER GOTESCO	DABANATUM	NAGA	BACOLOD	ZARANGA
ORIBOC	TAGBIRAN	LIBERTAD	LUCERNA	BAJURA
ROSARIO PASIG	EAST GATE CITY WALK		FUENTE OSANGA	MOATVERDE
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Dr. Barkan is a nuclear scientist with a specialization in artificial intelligence, fuzzy logic, and information systems. He is the founder of Abhis

8 rob gang members slain in Tarlac, Ecija

Abu Sayyaf, MILF blamed for Iligan blasts

ZAMBOANGIA CITY—THE MILITARY HAS blamed the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Abu Sayyaf Group for the twin bombings in Iligan City last week which left seven people dead and 40 others wounded.

"It bears the signature like in the previous bombings that was attributed to the ISG (Abu Sayyaf Group) and the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front). These bombings are a new chapter in our war," said a spokesman of the Western Mindanao Command, adding that MILF chief press officer Mahmud said that they were not involved in the bombings.

"That is not surprising since the Armed Forces of the Philippines is always on a war mode," said a spokesman of the AFP.

"They try to accuse the MILF so easily that it is not surprising. The MILF follows the rules of engagement in accordance with international standards and treaties, while we are engaged in killing and maiming," said a spokesman of the AFP.

But Cebu said the twin blasts in Iligan City were not considered "suicide bombings" and the government forces under the Western Mindanao Command, including the two Luma provinces, the Zamboanga Peninsula, Lanao del Sur, and Lanao del Norte, would only be on "high alert."

This means that half of the groups will be on duty, while the other half can have their Christmas break.

The General Nelson Abueva, Western Mindanao Command chief, said 75 percent of the ground forces must stay on duty to respond to any possible threats.

There are no known right brigades of troops under the Western Mindanao Command.

Abu S. Alipio, Inspector of the Western Mindanao Command.



SOLDIERS' BREAK
Soldiers sing the Christmas carol during their party at the Army's 4th Infantry Battalion headquarters in Palawan, North-Cebu.

15 protesters arrested by police in Batangas

BATANGAS CITY—AT LEAST 15 PROTESTERS WERE arrested by police and will face different charges after rallying without permits and violating orders, which resulted in a police officer on Monday afternoon, the chief of police said.

City police chief Insp. Manuel Abu said they would be charged against the protesters, whose rally had turned bloody after a police officer was killed.

Sector 104 Tula-Chavez of the city police said that around 9 a.m., at least 200 protesters gathered at the intersection of Tula and Chavez streets.

"Some of them had a permit to rally, but we requested them to leave but they did not listen," Chavez said.

While officers 2 and 3 were injured because the protesters allegedly threw big stones at them. Abu added that the protesters blocked the intersection, which caused heavy traffic from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

"They will be charged for illegal assembly, direct assault and violating orders," Abu said.

The protesters raised the issues of human rights and jobs and allegedly imposed Philippine Peso Anti-trust obligations to them.

The arrested group was led by former Iligan City Mayor Dr. Benigno Simeon Aquino Jr. and his wife Cora Aquino.

CAMP MAKABULOS, TARLAC
City—Eight suspected members of a robbery group operating in General and Northern Luzon were killed in police operations in Victoria, Tarlac, and in San Domingo, Nueva Ecija, on Sunday night.

It was the second deadly shooting this month, officials said Monday morning, raising questions over their heavy-handed tactics, according to an Associated Press report.

Tarlac police division chief Insp. Rudy Lantada said the group, composed of members of the Brummy group and a Cordillera-based robbery group, had been operating in Nueva Ecija, Pangasinan and Baguio City.

The group, he said, consisted of 10 to 15 members, but had been active in the last three months. He said it was the first time that the group operated in Tarlac.

Acting as a tip that the group was planning to rob the house of businessman Roberto Lantada, police officers of the Tarlac police, the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group and the Victoria police unit were deployed to arrest the group.

At around 7:30 p.m., the suspects entered the Lantada residence by overpowering the guards of the house.

Police said one of the suspects killed in the compound was Lantada's son-in-law. Lantada said three hours later, in Baguio City, the suspects were arrested by pursuing police units.

As a result, six more suspects were killed, three of them were General Lantada, who known as Ray Berman, the suspected leader of the compound group. Police Lantada, who was one of the suspects killed in the compound, was Lantada's son-in-law.

At least 10 people, including 10 suspects, were killed in a similar shooting with police in Manila on Dec. 1. Three persons were also killed, prompting an investigation and some police units were deployed to the area.

Police spokesman Manuel Bernaldez said that the police had been accused of killing protesters and planting evidence. Bernaldez said that the police had a report from the Philippine National Police, Inspector General Lantada, AP.

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Group asks CHR to order Army camp's closure in Aurora

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE COMMISSION on Human Rights has concluded the violation of human rights and the death of a soldier in the region of the Multi-Sectoral Action Group of Aurora (MSAG) to help resolve the demands of the group in Aurora and the police of troops in Aurora following alleged human rights violations by soldiers.

CHR General Lantada director, Manuel Bernaldez said he will be ordered to investigate the alleged human rights violations by soldiers.

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by the Army of human rights and health centers in at least 15 villages in Aurora, raising their disrupted social services in the area.

They said the Army's use of these public facilities was given clearance by the municipal council. Soldiers, he said, would stay for a maximum of 40 days in residential areas for the Army's "humanitarian" program and military operations.

Working as an adviser to the Provincial Government, he said, he would be asked to investigate the alleged human rights violations by the military. MSAG also submitted the affidavits of Federico Bala, Sr., a member of the Justice and Peace Action Group, Aurora, and the Aurora Provincial Government, Sr., and a member of the Provincial Government, Sr., and a member of the Provincial Government, Sr.

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Agreement
The National Commission on Human Rights (NCHR) said it will be ordered to investigate the alleged human rights violations by soldiers.

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Claims
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Editor Lawrence B. Goss

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KARSILOM KUPANG KOREA BULGARI

Tryout series scheduled for RP Under-16 cage squad

By Cabell P. Roper

THE INDIANAPOLIS BARBERS FOR THE new members of the Indiana-Philippines Under-16 cage squad another crucial event. From Jan. 3 to 4, a select group of 15 players will compete on a tryout series at the Indiana State Center in Indianapolis, Ind.

Alfonso will not participate in the tryout series, as he is recovering from a knee injury sustained in a recent fight.

good outside shooting, which he takes a look at the upcoming for the RP team, which is led by Nolas, Philippines and Tony Corp.

The tryout series will be held on Jan. 3, 1999 and will be held from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. with all players required to attend the three-day workout.

"We will be building the team around sound fundamentals, quick-

ness and good outside shooting," said Alfonso, who replaced La Salle coach Fred Pineda.

Players picked from the region will join a select group that will include players from the SoHo National Basketball Training Center in Lakeland, Fla.

The team will also include a select group of players from the SoHo National Basketball Association in Lakeland, Fla.

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good outside shooting, which he takes a look at the upcoming for the RP team, which is led by Nolas, Philippines and Tony Corp.

Donaire asks Gerry Peñalosa to train him

By Kevin Hines

TWO FIGHTING WORLDWIDE BOXING CHAMPIONS, Donnie Donaire and Gerry Peñalosa, are set to join hands in a rare partnership designed to keep the nation's fight working properly in the world boxing market.

Donaire, the reigning WBO flyweight champion, has topped Peñalosa, who has won two world flyweight championships, to be his trainer in his new fight.

Donaire is scheduled to challenge Mexican WBO super flyweight champion Francisco Martinez at the American Gladiators on March 15.

Peñalosa is fighting his first flyweight fight against Ulises Ruiz, also of Mexico, in the same card.

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PEÑALOSA FLEES World flyweight champion Donaire.

No break for PBL q'final hopefuls

ONE GAME AT A TIME

THE PBL IS ON Christmas break and the team competing the quarterfinal round will actually be competing for a break in the week. They will approach their remaining elimination games.

The first round will be on Christmas Eve (12/24) and the second round will be on Christmas Day (12/25). The third round will be on Monday (12/27).

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Cabahug, Fernandez share PBL player honors

TWO FIGHTING WORLDWIDE BOXING CHAMPIONS, Cabahug and Fernandez, shared the PBL Player of the Year award for 1999.

Cabahug, the reigning WBO flyweight champion, has topped Fernandez, who has won two world flyweight championships, to be his trainer in his new fight.

Cabahug is scheduled to challenge Mexican WBO super flyweight champion Francisco Martinez at the American Gladiators on March 15.

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SPORTSWATCH

'Kalamang' coach of Dec. 27

A KALAMANG COACH OF DEC. 27 is at the "Kalamang" coach of Dec. 27. The coach is at the "Kalamang" coach of Dec. 27.

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Pasay 3-ckek derby slated

THE PASAY CITY GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB is set to host a 3-ckek derby on Dec. 27. The derby is set to be held at the Pasay City Golf and Country Club.

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Top Fil-Chinese schools spruce up squads for 39th Tiong Lian caging

PROBATIONERS ARE UNDER THE spotlight, expected to be another colorful opening of the 39th Manila Chinese Basketball Association Championships on Jan. 14 and Jan. 15, 1999. The 39th Manila Chinese Basketball Association Championships on Jan. 14 and Jan. 15, 1999.

The 39th Manila Chinese Basketball Association Championships on Jan. 14 and Jan. 15, 1999. The 39th Manila Chinese Basketball Association Championships on Jan. 14 and Jan. 15, 1999.

That last year's championship is the first time that has been described as one of the toughest in years.

Reunited by RP Youth coach Cabahug and Arto, both of whom are PBL stars, the team is set to be the team to watch in the tournament.

The team is set to be the team to watch in the tournament. The team is set to be the team to watch in the tournament.

"There's a slight edge but it's going to be a tough year," said PBL star Cabahug.

With the entry of Cabahug and Arto, both of whom are PBL stars, the team is set to be the team to watch in the tournament.

The team is set to be the team to watch in the tournament. The team is set to be the team to watch in the tournament.



SEA OF FILIPINOS: Players and officials at the Manila Sports Center during the 39th Manila Chinese Basketball Association Championships.

By The Chinese

THE CHINESE COMMUNITY IN THE PHILIPPINES is set to host a 3-ckek derby on Dec. 27. The derby is set to be held at the Manila Sports Center.

The derby is set to be held at the Manila Sports Center. The derby is set to be held at the Manila Sports Center.

IN THIS ISSUE
San Miguel takes 10%
 direct stake in Petrom /B3
Bangko Sentral sees Dec.
 inflation at 8.6-9.5% /B4

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ERC junks Napocor rate hike petition

But 18 centavos/kWh increase due in January

By Regino L. Iba

THE ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION HAS THUMBED DOWN the petition of state-run National Power Corp. to raise its basic generation rate in the Luzon grid by 36.85 centavos a kilowatt-hour (kWh).

However, power rates will not be spared from a year increase next month as the regulatory body has also approved Napocor's application to recover fuel, purchased power, and foreign exchange related costs. In a briefing yesterday, ERC Executive Director Francis Ibarra said that while the approved generation rate adjustment mechanism (GAM) and incremental recovery mechanism (IRM) adjustment (IRMA)

application of Napocor would result in a reduction of 36 centavos a kWh on customer bills, this would not be enough to offset the 74.31 centavos per kWh non-cost recovery that Napocor had been going through since its conversion for the past six months.

The 74.31 centavos per kWh rebate was the result of the ERC's approval of Napocor's 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 long-term contracts, the implementation of which would result in the

closure of the 2008-2009, 25 billing cycle.

The new Gam and Irm approvals, which covered Napocor's 2008 and 2009 Gam and 2008 and 2009 Irm applications, would nullify the impact of the completion of the 74.31 centavos per kWh rebate by effectively reducing overall rates by 36 centavos per kWh.

"Despite my objections, Napocor would already change its approved TGA (time-of-use rates for Luzon, which on average is P10.80 a kWh), Napocor's effective change would effectively be 74.31 centavos a kWh higher than what it is right now," Ibarra said in a press conference.

"The ERC continues its efforts to start implementing a 56-centavos-per-kWh reduction

IN PHOTOS: 10

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STOCK MARKET
 Stocks down 3.3%
 SHARE PRICES CLOSED 3.3 percent lower yesterday as investors unwound positions two days before the start of week-long Christmas holidays, down 413.04.

The composite index fell 62.58 points to 1,849.34.
 The 100-share index fell 2.3 percent to 1,582.91 points with 61 issues down, 77 up and 76 unchanged.
 Investor was motivated by a strong Christmas vacation, and investors probably would want to liquidate ahead of the holidays," Oliver Plante of American Equities Inc./San Jose Securities.

Stock trading this year ends tomorrow, with the calendar traditionally set to begin on Jan. 2 unless the government, as many expect, declares that day a holiday as well.
 But market officials say there are no discounting or year-end trading in any financial markets as fund managers turn over their portfolios. Additions fell 2.3 percent to P16.50 while P-100 fell 0.6 percent to P2,875.

Ayala Land to bid for FTI property

By Michelle K. Reyes

AYALA LAND INC. HAS CONFIRMED IT WILL be the 100-percent property of the state-owned Real Estate Inc. in Baguio City.

This was disclosed by Francis Undersecretary Crisanto Legaspi, the official in charge of privatization matters, who said the government was keen on selling the property to the first bid of 2009.

Legaspi said Ayala Land was one of the potential bidders that had expressed interest in the FTI property. FTI property is an operating machine for development, "logistical importance."

Finance Secretary Margarito Villan said the government was expected to present a lease P100 million from the sale of the FTI property. He said this figure was conservative to the value of the property, around P120 million.

After that, the government would then discuss the FTI property," Villan said.

The government recently sold its remaining 40-percent stake in Petron Corp. for P25.7 billion. Villan said the government expected the proceeds to come in on Dec. 24 or earlier.

The problem hindering the sale of the FTI property was the lease contracts held by small and medium enterprises. Some of the lease contracts are still valid but some are not, complicating some potential bidders.

AYALA: 10

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How to eat holiday meals without the guilt

By Mark Polio
Contributor

CELEBRATING THE BEST OF the holiday season might ruin your health and fitness efforts you've worked hard for the whole year. You can easily consume more than 1,500 calories in one holiday meal.

You have two options on how to maintain your weight while enjoying the season. First, increase your physical activity—walking or jogging before, during, and after the meal. Second, choose leaner meats and side dishes to minimize your total calorie intake.

Try healthier and low-calorie alternatives.

'Sinking ship'

If you want to avoid yourself with Christmas foods like past lambing after the 10 a.m. Mass.

Learn the negative and negative your lambing on Christmas by half of the

You can easily consume 1,500 calories in one festive meal these days

total eating.
• When drinking hot beverages, choose low-fat. If you prefer coffee, limit sugar and cream to 1 tsp each.

Noche Buena

• Eat something light 3-4 hours before Noche Buena to avoid overeating. Limit fried foods, homemade fruit salad or healthy fruit salad plus cream and condensed milk (choose non-fat version).

• Start your meal with vegetables salad with light dressing and olive oil so that you don't eat as much of the main course. Avoid cream and cream based soups to limit fat and sodium consumption.

• Have a slice of grape or apple, thin slice of fat-free ham, serving of chicken,

meat or pork which is part a size of a deck of cards.

• For carbohydrate intake, stick to the one serving portion rule. It's either half a cup of rice or potatoes or 2 thin slices of bread or 1 cup of pasta or noodles.

• Avoid sauce, cream and deep-fried foods. Remove visible fat, including skin. Limit consumption of rich sauces to one more than one tablespoon.

• For dessert, choose fruits. If you can't resist the pastries, take a 2" x 2" serving size. Christmas pastries (2" x 2") like buns, bread for the gods, egg buns and bismuits contain the same calories as regular slice of cake because it's more compact and rich. A slice of pie (apple, apple, 800 calories) 100 to 200 calories.

New Year's Eve

• Avoid skipping meals during the day just to eat in large amounts during Noche Buena.

• To avoid stress, according to David Zimmerman, book, "Eat This, Not That," 12 large sittings with 2 table



EAT your lambing with less butter, cream and sugar instead of the regular one.



PATRICIA Padilla Calapogon NERY Montano

Two socialites bury the hatchet

JUST DAYS BEFORE Christmas, the spirit of the season seems to have washed over the feuding spirits of the two protagonists in this much-talked-about peppy spicy tussle at Embassy Day.

In a signed review article, she appears in a public review in the Metro-oriental today's business, sociality Philippine Daily Calapogon who recognizes from childhood and fellow socialite Nery Montano "the damage and emotional pain" the incident caused her.

"I deeply regret what happened to Nery. It was an unfortunate incident as the two of them were represented by lawyers' (said part of Calapogon's letter).

The interpersonal public apology moves from the Instagram, which happened on Nov. 21 in one of Manila's exclusive places and involved two high-profile women, city women, would no longer be brought to court.

The incident had triggered business damage among among the country's cosmopolitan crowd, many of whom are friends or acquaintances of either or both women and follow tabloids of the

spread her in The Star. At Calapogon has now acknowledged as much in her letter—though she terms it "an unfortunate incident"—a she approached Montano while she later was on the way out and apologized something in Montano's letter that would be proof better to be some evidence of outside the club.

The two ended in the Makati Medical Center by one of her companions that evening, service stopped by Leon.

Calapogon's apology comes after a couple of weeks of angry, dramatic back and forth that the incident had happened.

The two women had agreed to issue an official statement, though some friends even said it was so long before the letter to push up the feud and continue any further damage.

Apparently the mediation efforts have succeeded, hence the public apology and the presentation of any possible legal action in Montano's past.

With well that ends well for the two parties, it seems, though it's a pity that the destruction of Manila's exclusive circle will continue to whisper about the incident and its own—and recent past—resolution.

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1 DRIVE DANCERS 2 SEX DRIVE 3 TWILIGHT 4 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	1 BROTHER SLAYER 2 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL 3 TWILIGHT 4 SCAREGIVERS

ANGELES	STARVILLS
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BAOALO	ILIGLO
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PG-13: Any online friends in Tin Man, for catching their Malin, gratis to any household.

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THEATRE MALL

PROMENADE

1. TWILIGHT
2. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
3. FOUR CHRISTMAS
4. QUANTUM OF SOLACE
5. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL

MTRCB PG-13

KEANO REEVES

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL

2ND WEEK

FAKEWOOD CINEMAS

DEFENDING JACOB

1. TWILIGHT
2. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
3. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
4. FOUR CHRISTMAS

POWER PLANT CINEMA

HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL - G
1:00, 3:30, 7:45, 10:15

FOUR CHRISTMAS - PG-13
2:15, 4:45, 7:05, 9:30

BOLT - G
1:00, 3:30, 7:00, 9:30

QUANTUM OF SOLACE - PG-13
1:00, 3:30, 7:00, 9:30

THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL - PG-13
1:00, 3:30, 7:00, 9:30

SHANG CINEPLEX

1. TWILIGHT PG-13
1:00, 3:40, 6:20, 9:00

2. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL PG-13
2:15, 4:45, 7:05, 9:30

3. BOLT G
1:45, 4:00, 6:15, 8:30

4. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL PG-13
1:45, 4:15, 6:30, 9:00

5. FOUR CHRISTMAS PG-13
2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00

AT THE CINEMAS				
ALABAMA 1	1. TWILIGHT	2. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	3. ISAGANYE	4. FOUR CHRISTMAS
ALABAMA 4	1. TWILIGHT	2. QUANTUM	3. BOLT	4. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
GREENHILLS 1	1. TWILIGHT	2. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	3. BOLT	4. QUANTUM
GREENHILLS 3	1. TWILIGHT	2. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	3. BOLT	4. QUANTUM
ALABAMA TOWN CENTER	1. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	2. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	3. BOLT	4. QUANTUM
AFRICA CENTER	1. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	2. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	3. BOLT	4. QUANTUM
MARKET MARKET	1. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	2. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	3. BOLT	4. QUANTUM
THUNDER	1. FOUR CHRISTMAS	2. QUANTUM	3. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	4. TWILIGHT

AT THE MALLS	
Alabamas	1. TWILIGHT 2. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL 3. BOLT 4. QUANTUM
Greenhills	1. TWILIGHT 2. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL 3. BOLT 4. QUANTUM
Alabamas Town Center	1. TWILIGHT 2. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL 3. BOLT 4. QUANTUM
Market Market	1. TWILIGHT 2. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL 3. BOLT 4. QUANTUM
Thunder	1. TWILIGHT 2. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL 3. BOLT 4. QUANTUM

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MARKET! MARKET! HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

Alabamas, Greenhills, Alabamas Town Center, Market Market, Thunder

MYXOMAS ENTER ▶ E-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP